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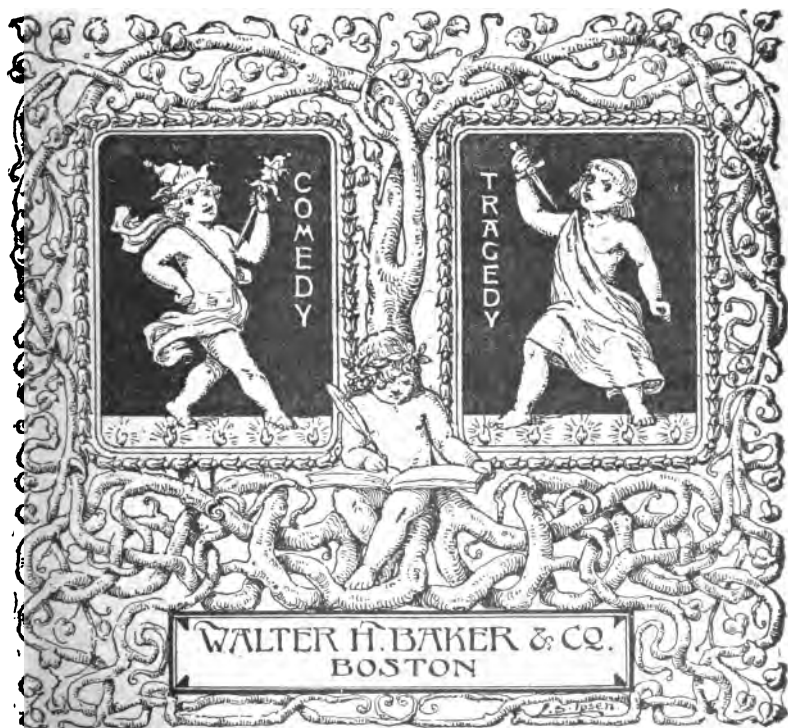


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A Virginia Heroine

A Comedy in Three Acts

By SUSIE G. McGLONE

BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

DAL 2417.3.15

A Virginia Heroine

CHARACTERS

MRS. DARE, *mistress of Greylawn.*

MARGARET LEIGHTON, *sister of Mrs. Dare.*

VIRGINIA LEIGHTON, *niece of Mrs. Dare and Mrs. Leighton,
in love with Philip Lee.*

BETTY DARE, *Mrs. Dare's daughter.*

RUTH LEE, *a Southern girl championing the North.*

BESSIE ALLEN } *Virginia's friends, with abnormal bumps
NELL CAREY } of curiosity.*

GRANNY ROYAL, *an old woman living on the edge of the
woods.*

TOPSY, *a self-constituted necessity.*

NORA, *hostile to naygurs.*

MARTHA LANE, *the village gossip.*

TIME.—A period during the Civil War.

PLACE.—Virginia.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Sitting-room at Greylawn, the home of Mrs. Dare.

ACT II, *Scene 1.*—House and Garden of Granny Royal.

Scene 2.—House and Garden of Granny Royal at night.

ACT III.—Room at Greylawn.



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A Virginia Heroine

ACT I

SCENE.—*The sitting-room at Greylawn.*

(TOPSY discovered sleeping by table. Enter MRS. DARE, C.)

MRS. DARE. Topsy, Topsy!

TOPSY (*talking in sleep*). No, I ain't a-goin'. I ain't a-goin'.

MRS. D. Wake up, Topsy, wake up.

TOP. (*waking, rubbing eyes*). Golly, missis, is dat you?

MRS. D. What does this mean, Topsy? It isn't quite six o'clock yet. Have you been here all night?

TOP. Dat's what I has been, missis, an' I is powerful stiff. (*Excitedly.*) Say, missis, has yer been in de kitchen yit?

MRS. D. No, I haven't, but what has that to do with your being here?

TOP. Well, when yer goes inter de kitchen yer won't fin' Dinah; an' when yer goes up de back stairs yer won't fin' Liza; an' when yer goes inter de barn yer won't fin' Sam.

MRS. D. Why, what do you mean?

TOP. Well, it's dis way, missis. I went inter de kitchen las' night—I wasn't goin' ter hook nothin' ter eat, honest, missis, I wasn't—an' dar was Dinah an' Liza an' Sam a-whisperin' an' a-noddin'. Sam was tellin' dem dat he was gwine ter jine de army. He was stickin' his chest out an' tellin' dem dat de No'the'n sojers had invitationed him ter jine wid dem, an' dat he 'spected he'd be Major Johnson soon. Den Dinah an' Liza said dat if he was gwine, dey was gwine ter be free—dey was gwine ter Kentuck. Den dey seed me standin' in de door an' Sam he says (*mimicking*), "We'd better take de kid along, else she'll be puttin' dem on our tracks." Den Dinah she begun ter pack a basket wid tings ter eat. (*Smacking lips.*) Dere was chicken an' bread an' jam an' pie an' coffee an' cheese an' cake an'—

MRS. D. But tell me quickly, Topsy, how is it that you are here?

TOP. Well, Sam he ketched me by de arm an' we all skun outen de kitchen door. An' when we come ter de big gate, Sam he let go my arm ter open de gate an' I run, back as fas' as I could. He—he—he, I guess dey didn't dass ter come arter me fear you-all would hear dem. It was so dark when I got in here dat I thought I'd wait till morning.

MRS. D. You are a good child, Topsy. You had better go, now, and get some sleep. If you see Miss Leighton, ask her to come into the sitting-room, for I want to talk with her.

TOP. All right, missis.

[Exit TOP., R.]

MRS. D. (*musings*). So it has come to this. I don't know that I blame the servants—it is the work of these Federals—these brave men who rob women. I never knew I could hate any one as I hate these soldiers. Though it hurt me sorely to see Robert march away, if I had ten sons I would gladly send them to annihilate these invaders. Ah, well, this won't help the present case. I suppose breakfast must be got somehow, I'll—— (*Enter AUNT MARGARET, C.*) Good-morning, Margaret.

AUNT MARGARET. Good-morning, Alice. I met Topsy just now and heard a very excited account from her about the deserters.

MRS. D. Well, what do you think of this new outrage?

AUNT M. I suppose it is what they call the "fortunes of war."

MRS. D. Really, Margaret, sometimes you are so provokingly calm under trying circumstances that I am divided between admiration and a desire to shake you.

AUNT M. (*smiling*). It doesn't pay to get worked up about it. The only serious result is that we shall have to live on our own cooking until we can get some help—that is, provided the thrifty Dinah has left us anything to cook. Topsy regaled me with a long list of good things Dinah stowed away in her basket.

MRS. D. I suppose it would really be more sensible for me to go and get breakfast than to stand here fuming.

AUNT M. Yes, matters might be a great deal worse. (*Exit MRS. D., R. AUNT M., speaks aloud.*) They really have left us in a sorry plight, but there is no use in adding fuel to the fire of Alice's wrath by sympathizing too much with her. The next problem will be to get some one to do the cooking. I must go

out after breakfast and see what I can do about finding some one.

Enter VIRGINIA LEIGHTON, C.

VIRGINIA. Good-morning, Aunt Margaret. (*Dropping into chair.*) Well, you are the only one in all this troubled household who looks calm this morning. When I went into the kitchen Aunt Alice was mixing muffins, looking worried to death, while Topsy was running in and out of the pantry with an egg in one hand looking for something to break it with. She had just seized the stove lifter when Aunt Alice caught her. But really, isn't it dreadful about the servants leaving us.

AUNT M. Yes, dear, it is very unfortunate. Aunt Alice is very much disturbed over it. You know how bitterly she hates these Union soldiers.

VIRG. Yes, I know she does, but they are fighting for the cause they believe to be right. 'Tis a privilege we all have in this free country of ours.

AUNT M. Their believing it to be right doesn't make it right, and doesn't prevent our resenting their attempts to convince us that they are right. They may conquer us—though I pray that may never happen—but they will never convince us.

VIRG. My dear Aunt Margaret, given a small platform and a desk to pound on, you would be a most eloquent speaker. But don't do it, aunty, for I should have to mend my own stockings then, and you do them so beautifully.

AUNT M. You do love to tease, Virginia, don't you? But seriously, child, you seem to me all too willing to defend these soldiers. I am afraid some of these dashing boys in blue are apt to find champions among our Southern girls, so don't think too much of them, child.

VIRG. What are you driving at, Aunt Margaret? Has Martha Lane been stirring you up with her gossip?

AUNT M. No, Martha has not been here this week. I only wanted to caution you, because when the heart is young, the head is foolish.

VIRG. Don't worry. I'll give you a guarantee that my head is perfectly sane.

(*Voice outside calling, "Aunt Margaret, Aunt Margaret."*)

AUNT M. There's Betty calling for me. Will you come

with me to the village after breakfast, Virginia? We must get a cook as soon as possible.

VIRG. All right, I'll go with you. (*Exit AUNT M., R.*) I was afraid that Aunt Margaret had got drift of my secret, and I don't want even her to hear of it till after this horrid war is over. Dear old Phil! I'd love to wear the ring he gave me, but if I did, the story would have to come out. Goodness, I guess Aunt Alice would rather see me ten kinds of an old maid rather than have me marry a Northerner—or rather a Union soldier, because of course Phil is a Southerner. But I honor him for fighting for the cause which he believes to be right. And I do wish Aunt Alice would be a little more cordial to Ruth Lee. Of course she stands up for her brother, but that's no reason why Aunt Alice should act toward her as if she had some personal grievance. If she should ever find out that Ruth helps Phil and me I don't know what would happen. Oh, dear, I wish there wasn't any North and South.

Enter TOP., R.

TOP. Brekfus' is dished, Miss Jinny. I done helped missis git it ready, 'cos Dinah ain't de cook now, and Liza ain't de maid now and Sam (*VIRG. exit, hastily*) ain't de choreman now. Well, Miss Jinny must have been in a hurry for her brekfus'. Golly, I guess I'll surprise dem whilst dey's eatin'. I jes remembers dat I heared missis say she had ter pick up de sittin' room dis mornin'. I'll pick up all de tings for her. (*Hurries about and picks up the furniture and piles it together.*) Golly, ef Dinah an' Liza an' Sam could see me now, dey'd be mos' astonishful. Dinah she uster say, "Topsy, you'se a no 'count nigger," an' Liza she uster say, "You'se de mos' ignominamusly chil' I ever see," an' Sam he uster say —

Enter BETTY, C.

BETTY. What under the shining sun are you doing, Topsy?

TOP. I'se jes' pickin' up de room for missis.

BET. I should say so. (*Peals of laughter.*)

TOP. (*aggrievedly*). What are yer laffin' at, Miss Betty?

BET. Oh, Topsy, you little goose.

TOP. (*with dignity*). Dey ain't no feathers on me, Miss Betty, an' I is very much occupationed now sence Dinah an' Liza an' Sam has went.

BET. Come, put the things back in their places and I'll

help you. Do you know, Topsy, you use the worst grammar I ever heard. Now that school is closed I think it might be fun to teach you grammar.

TOP. Law, Miss Betty, I'se afeared I'll be turrible busy dese days, 'cos yer see dere ain't no cook an' dere ain't no maid an' dere ain't no choreman now.

BET. Oh, you'll have time, Topsy. Aunt Margaret is going to get a girl, so you won't be busy all day. Won't you like that? (*Rocking.*)

TOP. Law, Miss Betty, look out yer don't tip over. Dem ere rockin' chairs is turrible risky tings. Once when Dinah was —

BET. Tell me, Topsy, how will you like studying grammar?

TOP. Oo-oo-oo, look out, missy, you'll git dat rug all riled up.

BET. Now, Topsy, answer me.

TOP. Golly, missy, I done got off de track of what yer was sayin'.

Enter MRS. D., C., with sewing.

MRS. D. Topsy, you had better eat your breakfast and then you can help Betty do the dishes. We shall all have to help now, Betty, but Aunt Margaret and Virginia are going to get a girl, so it will not be so hard after all.

BET. All right, mamma. Come, Topsy, we'll do the dishes and then we can talk about those lessons.

TOP. (*anxiously*). I guess we'se goin' ter be pretty busy. Dere's a powerful lot of tings to do—a powerful lot.

[*Exeunt BET. and TOP., R.*

MRS. D. (*seating herself*). I suppose these soldiers will rob our houses next. There is little else left for them to do. Ruth Lee ought to be proud of the cause she and her brother have adopted. And that makes me think—I do not like to see Virginia so friendly with Ruth. They are of the Southern stock and yet her brother is in the Union ranks and she is in entire sympathy with him. That is what comes of attending a Northern college. I think I'll speak to Virginia about this friendship of theirs.

Enter TOP., L.

TOP. Golly, missis, dey is two young ladies comin' up de avenue and dere ain't nobody to answer de door bell. Does yer want me to go?

MRS. D. Yes, you had better go, Topsy. You can show them right in. (*Exit TOP.*) They are probably some of Virginia's friends and they won't object to my sewing.

TOP. (*puts head in door*). Yes, she's in. Walk in, ladies.

Enter BESSIE and NELL, L.

MRS. D. Good-morning, Nell. Come right in, Bessie.

GIRLS. Good-morning, Mrs. Dare.

NELL. I hope we're not disturbing you by coming at such an early hour, but we were going to the village and thought Virginia might come with us.

MRS. D. I am glad to see you. Virginia is out, but she will be back soon. She went with Aunt Margaret to hire a girl. Our negroes left us last night and we are sadly in need of help.

BESS. Left you?

MRS. D. Yes, they tried to take Topsy with them, but she stole away from them. It is the work of the Federals. It seems there are but few outrages left for them to commit. They had evidently stirred up that foolish Sam until he decided to run away and join their army, and then Dinah and Liza took it into their heads that they wanted to be free, so all three went last night, taking with them a goodly supply of our stores.

NELL. Isn't it outrageous! And do you know, my brother Ned told us last night that they are sending squads of these Northern soldiers to stay at the different houses and we shall be obliged to give them food.

BESS. I know it. And I was so indignant about it that when I met Ruth Lee I said to her: "Those miserable Yankees are going to live upon us now." Ruth flushed up, and then I said: "Oh, Ruth, I forgot you were one of them." Just think of that!

NELL. Sometimes, Bessie, you do put your foot into it beautifully.

MRS. D. Ruth would be a very fine girl if it were not for her adoption of the Northern cause. It ill becomes a young girl to trample on the family honor as she has done.

NELL. Sometimes I think it is her adoration of that big, fair-haired brother of hers that makes her in sympathy with the Northerners.

BESS. Well, he looks so big and noble that one can scarcely imagine him defending a wrong cause.

NELL. (*laughing*). I guess Virginia thinks (*frantic motions from BESS*)—that is—I mean—I guess.

Enter VIRG., L.

VIRG. No, Virginia doesn't think. She's been too busy this morning to think. Hello, girls.

BESS. Well, Virgie, you have been out bright and early this morning, haven't you?

VIRG. Yes, you know "the early bird catches the worm," and this time the worm's name is Nora.

MRS. D. How you do talk, Virginia. But tell me, did you find a good girl?

VIRG. Yes, Aunt Alice. I think she will be all right. We didn't dare question her much about her ability to cook, for she was so lofty and condescending. Aunt Margaret was positively humble, and I—well, I only hope I didn't cringe.

NELL. Perhaps it will restore your self-respect somewhat to come to the village with Bess and me. We called thinking we should surely find you in.

VIRG. I'll come gladly, if you will wait until I have rested a minute.

Enter AUNT M., C.

AUNT M. Good-morning, girls. Well, Alice, we got your cook, but I would rather be responsible for every meal hereafter than ever hire another.

MRS. D. She must be a tyrant indeed, to so completely cow you and Virginia.

AUNT M. Well, no, she isn't a tyrant. I wouldn't engage her if she were, but perhaps I showed too plainly my anxiety to get her.

VIRG. Well, at least you have the comfort of knowing that you won't have to make bread for this ravenous household.

BESS. Yes, and you will have still greater cause to be glad you're not doing the cooking if any of those miserable soldiers are sent here.

AUNT M. That would be what they call the "irony of fate"—to take away our servants and then come here to be fed and waited upon.

MRS. D. They might be fed, for they would take the food themselves, but I don't know who would wait upon them.

NELL. Some places they don't even get food. You know

what a staunch defender of the cause Major Jones's wife is. Well, when she heard that some of the neighbors had to provide for the Northern soldiers, she vowed she wouldn't. So this morning when she saw four of them coming up the path she flew to the buttery door, locked it and put the key in her mouth. When they demanded breakfast she said not a word, but made deaf and dumb signs. They tried the door and then they tried to fit every key they could find to the lock, and finally they went away disgusted.

BESS. Wasn't that just the greatest thing you ever heard of!

VIRG. How did you hear of it, Nell?

NELL. Oh, Mrs. Jones told mother. After the soldiers had gone she came over to our house to borrow some alum. She said her tongue was covered with canker from the brass key.

AUNT M. I admire her resourcefulness.

VIRG. Likewise her courage. I know I should get so frightened that I should either swallow the key or drop it out of my mouth.

AUNT M. I have always heard that silence was golden, but in this case it seems it was brass.

VIRG. I bow to your wit, Aunt Margaret. Come, girls, let us start now before it gets too hot. And I see Martha Lane coming up the drive, so if we want to get away at all we had better go. [*Exeunt, c.*]

AUNT M. I suppose Martha has a budget of news as usual, and we are bound to listen to it.

MRS. D. Yes, I'm afraid she is good for the morning.

Enter MARTHA, L.

MARTHA. Good-morning, ladies. Isn't it a beautiful day? (*In a shrill whisper.*) Is any of the gentlemen around?

MRS. D. What gentlemen do you mean? You know my son Robert is with the army, and there are no other gentlemen in this house.

MAR. O I mean any of the Northern soldiers. (*Delightedly.*) There are several of them at our house, and it keeps me real busy cooking for them. I made some waffles this morning, and one of them—one of the soldiers, I mean—ate a whole plateful, and he says to me, says he, "Miss Lane, I could eat your waffles forever," and he put the emphasis on the "your."

MRS. D. I think it is shameful to invade our homes like this.

MAR. Yes, isn't it? But it is great company. One of them was singing—it was him that ate the waffles—he sang a song about blue eyes and kept looking right at me—my eyes are blue, you know. Well, I suppose we'll have to stand 'em.

AUNT M. Yes, it seems so. None have been sent here as yet.

MAR. I met Ruth Lee this morning and she looked kind of pale. It must be rather hard on her to have her brother in one army and her lover in the other. You know, of course, Mrs. Dare, that Robert was courting Ruth before he 'listed.

MRS. D. You must have been misinformed, Martha, my son would never so far forget the family honor as to marry one who was traitor to the South. It must be some idle gossip. It cannot be true.

MAR. Don't get flustered, Mrs. Dare. Maybe 'tis only talk—I shouldn't be s'prised—people do get up such stories—but I know it is a fact.

MRS. D. No, it cannot be so. I would not —

Enter TOP., L.

TOP. Missis, dey's a lady wants ter see yer. She says her name is Miss—Miss—Miss —

VOICE (*from without*). Flanagan!

TOP. Miss Fil—Fil —

VOICE. Flanagan, Oi say Flanagan.

TOP. Miss F-Flammergam.

MRS. D. Tell her to come in, Topsy.

TOP. Come in, Miss Flammeram.

Enter NORA, with hat-box, umbrella, etc., etc., L.

AUNT M. Good-morning!

NORA. Same to yersilf, ma'am.

AUNT M. This is Mrs. Dare, for whom you are coming to work.

MRS. D. I suppose you have had some experience before?

NORA. Oi have.

MRS. D. What wages do you expect?

NORA. I get four dollars a week and I has my company in the kitchen. I don't do no starched clothes and I goes out every Sunday.

MRS. D. Well, I think we can agree on that. I think you will not find it hard here. Our family is small, and Topsy here will be able to help you some.

NORA (*contemptuously*). I don't need no sich help as that.

MRS. D. Topsy will show you to your room, and then you may go into the kitchen, and I will be there.

(*TOP. lifts up NORA's bundles.*)

NORA. Lave it there! Lave it there, I say. (*To MRS. D.*) Would yez be afther tellin' me, ma'am, is there any more like that, here?

MRS. D. If you mean any more negroes, there are none but Topsy. You may go now, Nora, and come to the kitchen as soon as you can.

[*Exit NORA R., TOP. trailing after.*]

AUNT M. I foresee a siege of war between Nora and Topsy.

MRS. D. Perhaps we can reconcile them. If that is Nora's only failing I would rather stand it than trouble to find some one else. 'Tis no easy task in these days to find an independent servant, and she really asks very moderate wages.

AUNT M. Oh, we'll keep her at any cost, and no matter what her faults are. I could never look for another.

MRS. D. If you will excuse me, Martha, I will go into the kitchen and get things ready for Nora.

MAR. Certainly, Mrs. Dare, certainly. (*Exit MRS. D., R.*) Dear me, didn't Mrs. Dare get stirred up about Robert? Of course I know Ruth Lee stands up for the Union soldiers, her brother being one of them, but that oughtn't to make so much difference. Some of those soldiers are quite nice. (*Simperingly.*) I'm sure the one that ate the waffles is a real gentleman.

AUNT M. No doubt he is. And it certainly must be gratifying to have him appreciate your waffles so much.

MAR. Yes, and after he had finished the plateful, he told me that he had never cared for *waffles*, but he enjoyed *my* waffles. He said they were jacker-cracks, or something like that, and I suppose that means that they were very nice. Dear me, though, I hope he won't take to being serious with me. Somehow I like the boys pretty well until they get real attentive and then I—well, I suppose I'll get over being fickle. Once, though, I thought I should be persuaded to give my hand.

AUNT M. And did you refuse?

MAR. Well, he didn't get around to asking for it. You see it was this way. You remember when Braley West started in the monument business two years ago? Well, soon after that

he began calling at the house. He came quite a few times, but I didn't give him much thought, 'cause he was rather old and sorter quiet. I guess he was pretty well on to forty years. After awhile I begun to suspect he was coming to see me, though he always asked to see mother, but I suppose he did that for a blind. Well, bimeby I begun to think p'raps I should like him pretty well after all, though he wouldn't talk of nothing but monuments, tombstones and the like, but then I knew he was always kinder bashful.

AUNT M. It must have been rather depressing to have him continually talk of such gruesome things.

MAR. Well, yes, it was rather. Well, to make a long story short, he came one night and I could tell by the set of his tie that something was up. He acted real nervous—couldn't sit still, and kept going from one chair to another, until at last I said, "Goodness, Braley, is there anything on those chairs?" "No," says he, "there's something on my mind." I felt sure that he was going to speak, and I had quite decided that I'd say, "Yes, Braley." I was thinking I'd be married in pale green, and I was planning who I'd ask to the wedding. At last he says, "I got something to ask ye, Martha." "I'll be pleased to grant it," says I. "Perhaps I'd orter speak to your mother first," says he. "Oh, I guess she'll be willin'," says I. Just then mother opens the door, and Braley jumps up and says, "O Mrs. Lane, I've been wanting to ask you if you don't want a monument for Mr. Lane's grave. I can sell you a real nice one cheap." Mother said she couldn't afford one just then, and after awhile Braley said, "Good-night," and I ain't seen him since. I don't believe he only wanted to sell a tombstone. Mother and me don't agree on that. She says he only had an eye for business coming to the house, but I believe that if she hadn't come in so sudden that night, my name would be Mrs. Braley West now.

AUNT M. That was hard on you, Martha.

MAR. Well, I suppose I'll have to stand it. Gracious, it's getting late. I've got a lot of cooking to do before dinner. I'll have to go, I guess.

AUNT M. Come over soon again to see us.

[*Exeunt, L.*]

Enter NORA with duster, C.

NORA. Well, I thinks I'll be after loiking this place purty well. The only thing that do be frettin' me is that belike they

may be kinder fussy about the waitin' on table. Whin the lady axed me who I worked for I gave her a lot av names, not tellin' her that they were all boarders at Miss Flint's. What she's not knowin' won't be hurtin' her. But, hivens to Betsey, that black little naygur av a coon will be the death of me. I can't shtand naygurs, and that craythur is under me feet wherever I go.

Enter TOP., with flowers; sits in chair R., to arrange same.

TOP. Golly, dese yere flowers is mighty odorsome, ain't dey?

NORA. If it's the shmell ye're spaking av, Oi have a cold in me head and Oi can't shmell nothin'.

TOP. Cold in yer head, has yer? Well, once when Liza—dat's her what ain't de maid now—when Liza had a cold once, Dinah—dat's her what ain't de cook now—Dinah she wrapped a red rag round Liza's throat and she gave her some vinegar and pepper and made Liza keep bubblin' it without swallying it, an' Liza she near choked, an' den Dinah she gave her some medicine on a spoon, an' den —

NORA. I towld ye I had a cold in me head, not in me throat.

TOP. O-o-oh! Well, once I heerd Sam—dat's him what ain't de choreman now—I heer Sam tell Dinah to go soak her head. Dat might be good for a cold, why don't yer try it?

NORA. Lave that chair till I dusht it. The bowldness av the loikes av you to be advisin' me.

TOP. (*confidentially*). Say, if you kin help yerself don't let Miss Betty hear yer talk. Sho' as yer do she'll say you ain't got good speech, and she'll want ter learn yer lessons.

NORA (*indignantly*). I'll have ye know me speech is all right and it ain't for the likes av ye to be criticisin' it. Git out av that chair an' don't be gettin' in me way like this. (*TOP. sticks out tongue and goes to table.*) Clear out o' this! Me clean table that I had just dushted! Clear out, Oi say. (*Exit TOP., R., hastily.*) A sassy naygur is the sassiest thing alive, but I'll soon learn her. Sometimes I think it is stupid she is and then again I think it is cuteness. There, now, Oi guess Oi'd betther be gitting the vegetables ready for dinner.

[*Exit NORA, R.*]

Enter VIRG. and RUTH, L.

VIRG. Now, Ruth, dear, I know you've got some news

about Phil. I was just burning with impatience to hear and I was afraid Bess and Nell would come back with us.

RUTH. Well, I'll tell you quickly and then we mustn't talk of it here, for walls have ears, you know. Phil has been made a colonel. Isn't that fine for a mere boy?

VIRG. O I knew he'd do something grand. Phil is—but there I mustn't talk about it any more. Dear me, it's hard for a girl to keep such a secret. But there, I am selfish, Ruth. You have two to worry for besides bearing the coldness of those who used to be your friends.

RUTH. Don't sympathize with me, Virginia. I can't bear that. Sometimes I feel so weary and hurt that I don't know what to do. But then, you are such a staunch friend to me—and moreover this war must end some time, and with it the people's indignation may melt. When that time comes, if our dear ones are safe, I'll be so happy that I'll forgive the slights I now receive.

Enter Mrs. D., c.

MRS. D. Ah, you have a visitor, Virginia. Good-morning, Miss Lee.

RUTH. Good-morning, Mrs. Dare.

VIRG. Won't you sit down and have a chat with us, Aunt Alice?

MRS. D. (*coldly*). No, I won't interrupt you. Dinner will be ready in ten minutes, Virginia.

VIRG. Oh, Ruth, you will have dinner with us, won't you? She must stay, mustn't she, Aunt Alice?

MRS. D. Certainly, if you wish her to. You will stay, Miss Lee?

RUTH. I thank you, no. Good-bye, Virginia. [*Exit L.*]

VIRG. (*horrified*). Oh, Aunt Alice!

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE I.—*Garden and exterior of house of GRANNY ROYAL.*

Enter, from L., GRANNY ROYAL, bent, carrying cane and basket.

GRANNY (*straightening up*). I am well nigh tired to death. It is weary work to go around all day with my back bent, but the plan works—yes, it works well. Little the soldiers think, when they see this stooped old woman going about gathering herbs, that she can walk as straight as any young girl. But it is worth any trouble to save myself from housing these Northern soldiers. They wouldn't dream of demanding food of a bent old woman like me—but I'm smart yet—yes, I'm smart yet. Hark! (*Doubling over.*) That was a false alarm. I thought 'twas some one coming. Ah, well, I've done a good day's work. What with nursing young Robert Dare and trying to keep the neighbors out I've had a trying day. Poor Ruth, she will be so glad when she hears that Robert came here when he was hurt. 'Twould go hard with me if those Yankee soldiers found out I was harboring an enemy of theirs. However, I'll not borrow trouble. There! I must go in and give Robert some herb tea. 'Tis a sign I am growing old—this habit of mine of talking out loud to myself—and 'tis dangerous these days. [*Exit, into house.*]

Enter, from L., MAR. ; peering at house.

MAR. I wonder if she is in. Hark! Yes, I can hear her moving around. Somehow she's so queer I don't like to ask her to tell my fortune, but they say she tells them real good. I'll knock anyway. (*Approaches door, hesitates and then retreats.*) Oh, I don't dare to—I guess I'd better not. But I must find out about that nice soldier. I'll run up to the door so that I won't lose courage. (*Makes a rush up the steps and knocks. Door opens cautiously.*) Howde do, Miss Royal?

GRAN. Howde do, Martha?

MAR. It's a nice day.

GRAN. So it is, now that you speak of it. Can I do something for you?

MAR. I just thought I'd drop in to see you.

GRAN. Well, if it is all the same to you I'll come out to see you. We can sit under the trees.

MAR. Certainly, Miss Royal, certainly. (*Descends steps, GRAN. following.*) It's a real nice day, ain't it?

GRAN. So you've said before.

MAR. Yes, it's such a nice day that I thought I'd come—to—have my fortune told.

GRAN. Well, I never hanker after bad news on a nice day.

MAR. What did you say?

GRAN. Oh, nothing. Well, give me your hand. (*MAR. extends gloved hand.*) Usually people take their gloves off.

MAR. Oh, yes, of course.

GRAN. (*examining hand*). You have a long life. It's been pretty long already, but it will be longer, yes, it will be longer. The heart line is wandering, but I see no serious breaks in it. There are a number of men figuring in your life. (*MAR. grows excited.*) Your sentimental bump is highly developed. Toward the end the lines are blurred and therefore it is impossible to tell what the outcome will be. That is all I can see.

MAR. Thank you, Miss Royal, thank you. Take this for your trouble. (*Handing her money; aside.*) It's rather encouraging, but still I do wish I could find out how it is all coming out. [*Exit, L.*]

GRAN. They say "there's no fool like an old fool." I'll bet she's setting her cap at some one. 'Tis well she has nothing to worry her in these days of trouble. Well, here's some one else.

Enter NORA, with basket, from R.

NORA. Top av the mornin' to yez.

GRAN. Good-morning. And what brings you here?

NORA. Nothin' brings me here, but I brings this basket of jellies here from Mrs. Dare. She sinds her regards and hopes as how yer rheumatiz is not troublin' ye.

GRAN. Mrs. Dare is very good to old neighbors. Sit down and rest yourself. It's a long walk in the sun. Are you working for Mrs. Dare now?

NORA. The same, ma'am. An' a foine lady to work for she is. There's full and plenty on the table and no one watching the bite ye put in yer mouth.

GRAN. Yes, she is a fine woman—a fine woman.

NORA. As I'm here I'd like ye should tell me fortin. Miss

Betty she tould me ye can read the future, and I'm a little worried about Barney. He's a good lad but he takes a sup. Sorra a sight I've had av him since I came to work here, an' I'd like to know if he is gallivantin' with any other girls.

GRAN. So it's Barney's fortune you want me to tell, is it?

NORA. No. It's mine I want ye to tell.

GRAN. Well, let me look at your hand. (NORA *extends hand*.) Your life will be long.

NORA. Thank hiven fer that.

GRAN. But there's a dark shadow across it.

NORA. I'll bet it's that little rascal av a naygur.

GRAN. You've had a long journey on the water not very long ago.

NORA. Faith an' you're right, Oi have.

GRAN. There are two or three men in your life and —

NORA (*excitedly*). Is Barney there an' is he sober?

GRAN. The one you will marry is dark.

NORA. Och, dear, and Barney's hair is red.

GRAN. I was going to say his hair was dark red.

NORA. Oh, ye're right, ma'am, ye're right.

Enter TOP., R.

TOP. (*breathlessly*). Say, de kittle was boilin' over an' I didn't dass ter tech it.

NORA. Hivens to Betsey! is there anny place at all I could go where ye'd not be pestering me?

TOP. Golly, yer'd better hurry. De lid of de kittle riz right up an' I put de dish pan on top of it. P'raps dat's riz too by dis time.

NORA (*to GRAN.*). Thank ye kindly fer tellin' me fortin'. I'll be lavin' ye now. Good-day, mum.

[*Exeunt NORA and TOP., R.*

GRAN. Well, I think I've done enough to deserve a nap. Whether or no, I guess I'll take one. [*Exit into house.*

Enter RUTH, R., in deep thought; VIRG. running after.

VIRG. Ruth, dear, I've been trying to catch up with you for quite a distance. I was afraid you'd get away from me.

RUTH. I was going in to see Granny Royal, but we can sit here a few moments and have a chat.

VIRG. It seems ages since we've had one. Ruth, dear, I'm terribly sorry and ashamed at what Aunt Alice did to you.

There's no use in my talking about it, I suppose. You know she's terribly bitter about Phil fighting for the North and I'm afraid, too, that she has had some inkling of Robert's feeling for you. It's too bad, but it must come out right some time.

RUTH. Yes, it must come out right, some time, but it's hard waiting. But tell me, Virginia, is your aunt angry with you—has she any suspicion of how matters stand with you and Phil?

VIRG. The Fates forbid! I don't dare to think of how angry she would be if she knew. But if any one of us is angry about you, Ruth, it is I. I didn't say anything after you left that day, for I was afraid I would say too much. I am not easily stirred up, but I was fairly seething with rage that day.

RUTH. Don't feel badly about it, Virginia? I was not very much surprised at her outburst, for I felt for some time that she disapproved of me. (*Enter BESS and NELL, R., who stop, then step behind trees.*) But let's not talk of it. I've got something for you.

VIRG. Is it from Phil?

RUTH. Yes. I got a letter from him this morning, and in it was one for you. I have it here. I won't keep you waiting to read it. I'll go in to Granny and leave you to enjoy it. Good-bye, Virginia.

VIRG. Good-bye, Ruth. (*Exit RUTH.*) I guess I'll go home. There's no one at home but Nora and Topsy, and I won't be disturbed. [*Exit, R.*]

(*BESS and NELL come forward.*)

BESS. Gracious! I was afraid they'd hear us. So it is really true that Phil Lee and Virginia are in love. Well, this is exciting.

NELL. What would her aunt do if she heard of it?

BESS. Goodness, wouldn't there be a scene?

NELL. Really, Bess, I suppose it wasn't really square for us to listen, was it?

BESS. Well, we didn't come for that purpose, but of course — Heavens! I hear some one coming to the door. Quick, get behind that tree. (*They hide.*)

Enter GRAN. and RUTH.

RUTH. Quick, Granny, tell me all about it. I didn't dare to speak a word in the house for fear we would wake Robert. How did he get here?

GRAN. Well, last night about half-past nine I was sitting in the dark, for it is too hot to go to sleep early these nights. Soon I heard a sharp rap at the door. I have to be wary, so I tried to look through the blinds, but bless you, child, the night was so dark I couldn't see anything. When I asked who was there, the answer came, "Robert Dare." I wasn't afraid then, for I knew his voice. I opened the door, and the poor lad staggered in.

RUTH. Was he badly hurt, and how did it happen, Granny?

GRAN. I didn't let him talk until I had fixed him comfortably; and then he told me that he had been commissioned to carry some important messages from his colonel to General Lee. He had to make most of his journey by night so as not to be discovered, and last night in the dark his horse became frightened and threw him. His shoulder is badly wrenched, and I fear his ankle is broken. He managed to drag himself here, and he was well-nigh exhausted.

RUTH. Poor Robert! But I'm so glad he came to you, for I know you're a good nurse, Granny, and you'll do everything you can for him.

GRAN. Of course I will, child. But that isn't all. He is well-nigh worried to death about those messages. They must get to the general by to-morrow night, and Robert will not be able to get up for some time. We must find some way of sending them, because Robert is chafing and fretting himself to death.

RUTH. Now, what shall we do? You say Robert cannot possibly go himself?

GRAN. No, positively he cannot. His ankle is frightfully swollen, and 'twould be impossible for him to attempt the journey.

RUTH. Then I'll do it, Granny. I'll go in his stead. 'Tis the least I can do for him.

GRAN. And you'll not be afraid to undertake the journey, child? I'd hate to think I was letting you go into danger, but I'm afraid it would be out of the question for me to go myself.

RUTH. Remember, Granny, that I'm a soldier's sister —

GRAN. And a soldier's sweetheart, unless I'm mistaken.

RUTH. Hush, hush, Granny! But really, I'll not be afraid to go.

GRAN. Ah, you're a lassie after my own heart. I knew you were brave enough to do it, and there is no one else to go.

I must stay here to take care of the boy, and besides you will make the journey more quickly than I. And now I will tell you my plan: I do not think it will be wise for you to go as you are. You might meet some of these Yankee soldiers, and it might arouse suspicion, for they well know that it is unusual for a young girl to travel alone in these days.

RUTH. Then what am I to do?

GRAN. My plan is to dress you up to look like me. The soldiers all know me and wouldn't think of stopping me. I don't think it will be very hard to do, for my face belies my years, and I do not think any one will look at you very closely. Anyway, it is all we can do.

RUTH. Yes, it is all we can do.

GRAN. I think you'd better start after dark, for some of the neighbors about here might be more observant than we care to have them. And we must have you go in the opposite direction from Dare's house, for every time that Topsy meets me she pesters me to tell her about the goblins, and that would be risky for you.

RUTH. It's lucky I'm not afraid to be out at night.

GRAN. You will not have to travel far to-night. A little way out on Willow Road an old friend of mine lives. I will give you a note to her and she will be glad to put you up for the night. You can bring her a bottle of mint cordial that I've been meaning to send her for some time. And for the rest, I will tell you how to reach the ranks when you come to-night.

RUTH. You have planned it well, Granny. I hope I'll carry it out as well.

GRAN. I have no fear that you won't. Remember! Come as soon as it grows dark, and be brave.

RUTH. Look for me when you see the evening star, Granny—and I will be brave.

[Exit RUTH, L.]

GRAN. She is a brave lassie, bless her. Well, I must have everything ready for her when she comes to-night, and there is not much time. (GRAN. goes into house.)

(BESS and NELL come from behind trees.)

BESS. Oh, isn't this exciting!

NELL. So Ruth Lee and Robert Dare are in love with each other. It is bad enough about Virginia and Philip Lee, but this complicates things further. I'll warrant there'll be some stumbling-blocks in their way.

BESS. And to think of Ruth being willing to carry messages

to General Lee when she is such a staunch Unionist. Oh, we must see it out. We'll come here to-night before Ruth gets here. Why, it's better than a story-book romance. Her rebel lover lying wounded in the house while she starts out at night-fall to carry important despatches to his general, and —

NELL. For goodness' sake, Bess, will you stop spouting that nonsense? I never knew you were such a romantic goose. You'll be having Granny out here in a minute, and she might get suspicious and think we heard more than it was meant we should. Come, we had better be going. I am going home the other way, for I must give Martha Lane a message from mother.

BESS. Well, be sure to be here early.

NELL. Trust me, I am as curious as you are.

BESS (*with a grand bow toward the house*). Look for us before you see the evening star, Granny.

[*Exeunt severally R. and L.*]

SCENE 2.—*Same stage setting. Time, night.*

Enter TOP., from L.

TOP. (*looking about fearfully*). Golly, but I is afeared. It's mos' dretfully dark. I didn't want ter come nohow, but Nora she would make me come after that basket she lef' dis afternoon. I done tol' her I was afeared an' she says ter me, "You go 'long, you li'l good-fer-something. Yóu'se so black nobody'd see yer in de dark." But ef dey didn't see me I'se been a seein' tings all de way along. What's dat? (*Voices singing "Maryland, my Maryland."*) 'Top. *listens in rapt wonder. Voices die away.*) Golly, wasn't dat gran'? Well, I guess I'll hurry afore it gets later. (*Runs up steps and knocks at door. GRAN. opens it.*)

GRAN. Hello, Topsy, what do you want so late in the evening?

TOP. I don' want nothin'. Dat Nora she done lef' her basket here dis afternoon an' now she done made me come after it—an' it's turrible dark, an' I'm turrible afeared an' it's gittin' turrible late.

GRAN. Well, now I call that a shame to send a little thing like you out after dark.

TOP. Yes. I done tol' Nora dat de goblins was a sneakin'

roun' after dark an' it was dangerous ter stay out, an' she says : "Dey'll never tech yer. Every creetur knows its own." An' I says, "Knows its own what?" an' she closed de door in my face.

GRAN. And you came here all alone, child?

TOP. Dat's a fact. I'se afeared of goblins, but I'se mos' powerful afeared of Nora.

GRAN. Well, you needn't be so afraid of the goblins. They don't come out till real late. I'll get you your basket so you can go home right off.

TOP. Yes, I better be goin' in a hurry. (*GRAN goes after basket; TOP. plants her back against the door.*) Dey can't nothin' git behin' me now. Golly I wish dis door would stay behin' my back all de way home. It's turrible ter feel tings tryin' ter grab yer heels in de dark.

GRAN. (*returns with basket*). Here is your basket, Topsy.

TOP. Thank yer, marm. Good-night. (*Races off stage; GRAN. closes door.*)

Enter BESS and NELL from R.

BESS. Well, we're here.

NELL. Yes, but we'd better not stay here long. Ruth will be coming at any moment.

BESS. Oh, I never felt so excited in all my life.

NELL. And I never felt so sneaky.

BESS. Well, we're only curious, that's all. Goodness, I think I hear a step, Nell.

NELL. To the trees, Bess!

Enter RUTH slowly from L.

RUTH. Well, here I am, and the evening star is just rising. Granny will be looking for me. O I wonder if I am doing a wicked thing? I wonder would Phil call me a traitor? These messages I am to carry to General Lee may be a plan of attack. It may mean serious injury to Union troops. I may be helping the Southern cause. Oh, what ought I to do! But how could I do otherwise than help Robert? A man loves his country—he will do anything for it. I love Robert and I will do anything for him. Anyway if his horse hadn't stumbled he would have carried the messages safely. The Union soldiers did not capture him. I am not robbing them of a prisoner. And besides these messages may not do our side any great harm. I do not know what they contain—and I do not want

to know. Well, I must act quickly before I lose courage. (*Ascends steps and knocks.*)

GRAN. (*opening door*). Ah, you are here, child. Come in. (*They go in.*)

(*BESS emerging from behind tree.*)

BESS. Oh, they're going in. (*Gazes disappointedly at door; GRAN. comes out.*) Oh, no, they're not. (*Gets quickly behind tree.*)

GRAN. I'll just let them have a few moments' chat together. It will help her make the journey. Well, if I were a girl I'd do as much myself for a lad like Robert Dare. There! I think this cape and hood will hide her well enough. I'll let her take my stick, too. I can get another when I need one. (*Voices singing, "The Vacant Chair."*) Ah, there are some young people happy in spite of the war. They must be coming back. I heard them going down the road a little while ago.

After singing enter RUTH.

RUTH. Now I am ready for anything, Granny. Tell me what you want me to do.

GRAN. I am going to dress you up in these clothes and give you my stick and a basket of herbs. I always have herbs in my basket, so no attention will be paid to it. In the middle of the herbs I have placed the messages.

RUTH. Oh, granny, as carelessly as that!

GRAN. The more careless the better. No one would dream of anything important being in a basket of greens. You can take either of the two lanes leading to Willow Road. You remember I told you that my old friend's house is on Willow Road and she will put you up for the night. You will find the note to her in the pocket of the cape. The house is only an hour's walk from here. Her son is going to drive over to Intervale to-morrow morning early and he can take you that far. That will prevent the chance of your being stopped on the road.

RUTH. That is not going to be so very bad, unless some one discovers that I am not Granny Royal. Well, I am not going to worry too much about it. Robert has told me how I am to reach the general's tent and I'll trust in God to escape detection. The camp is about five miles out on the road from Intervale, so I will surely reach there early in the day.

GRAN. If all goes well, you surely will.

RUTH. Poor Robert! He is feeling very worried about my undertaking this journey. I am afraid you'll have to spend your time in assuring him that I will be all right.

GRAN. I know it's fretting him, but I'll tell him how brave you were. He'll be proud of you, child.

RUTH. Look out, granny, you'll be making a heroine out of me and that won't do.

GRAN. Well, 'tis true.

RUTH. It is growing late, granny, don't you think you had better help me put these things on now?

(GRAN. *proceeds to dress her.*)

GRAN. 'Tis quickly done. Just slip this cape about you. This hood will hide you almost completely. There now, if I met you on the road I would mistake you for myself.

RUTH. Then I am as safe as disguise can make me.

GRAN. There! I thought there was something else. Just wait a minute.

(GRAN. *goes into house.*)

RUTH. Dear me! when I stop to think of it, I am afraid—that's what comes of being a girl. And now that granny has bundled me up I feel like laughing. But most of all I want to just sit here and have a good cry. (*Rising.*) There! I am nothing but a coward and Rob thinks I am so brave. I'll make myself be brave. It can't be so dreadful anyway. Perhaps I shall not meet a single soldier.

Enter GRAN.

GRAN. Now the disguise will be complete. I always wear blue glasses in the sun to protect my eyes. Now surely no one will recognize you.

RUTH. That's good, granny. I dreaded having to look at any one. Now I won't mind it.

GRAN. And do not forget, child, the soldiers know me as a bent old woman.

RUTH. Oh, granny, dear, I forgot all about that. Must I really do that?

GRAN. It would be well to when you are in the open road in the daytime. The soldiers are sometimes prowling around and you might chance upon them, although I pray you may escape them altogether.

RUTH. Well, I suppose it is best. How is this? (*Imitates GRAN.*)

GRAN. That will do very well.

RUTH. I think I'd better start now. It is getting late. Be sure to take good care of Robert, won't you, and tell him I wasn't a bit afraid.

GRAN. I'll tell him, child. Good-bye, and a safe journey to you.

RUTH. Good-bye.

[*Exit RUTH.*]

GRAN. (*looking after her*). Ah! the moon is rising. The way will not be so dark for her after all. (*Comes forward and sits down.*) That wasn't a bad bit of planning for an old woman to do. Ha! ha! these smart Yankee soldiers would hang me for a spy or something of that sort if they knew the work I have been doing to-day. But surely it has been a good work. I am too old to fight for any cause. I would have done as much for one of the boys in blue if he had come to me. (*Rising.*) I suppose Mrs. Dare would never forgive me if she knew I had been helping on matters between Ruth and Rob. I don't know but what I am too old to be meddling in young people's affairs,—but then, "All the world loves a lover," and I'm not unlike the rest of the world. (*Goes into house, locking door after her.*)

(*BESS and NELL come forward.*)

BESS. (*solemnly*). Nell, will you please shake me. I feel as if I'd been watching a play.

NELL. And to think how we despised Ruth Lee! and not one of us would have the courage to do what she is doing.

BESS. For goodness' sake, Nell, don't make me feel any meaner or smaller than you can help.

NELL. Do you know I think we ought to tell Mrs. Dare. She might well be proud to have Ruth Lee for a daughter-in-law.

BESS. Agreed, Nell. We'll do it. It will help matters along wonderfully.

NELL. Hush, Bess, I hear Granny coming to the door. We'd better fly.

[*Exeunt hastily.*]

(*GRAN. opens door and steps out.*)

GRAN. (*looking about*). I thought I heard voices, but there's no one here. How still and calm it is to-night—and how

lonely, too. One wouldn't think that near by there were soldiers only waiting for the word to march against their enemy. Somehow—I don't know why—I feel that this war will end soon—and I pray it may. I am tired of this struggling and this anxiety and I long for peace. Well, I must see if Robert sleeps and if he does I'll go to rest myself. (*Goes into house; low music.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*Same as Act I.*

Enter TOP., R.

TOP. Golly, somethin' gwine ter happen. Nora she done gave me a piece of cake an' tol' me I didn't need ter do de dishes. Dey's somethin' in de air. I wish dey allers was. My, but dat cake was good.

Enter NORA, C.

NORA. O ye're here, are ye?

TOP. Yas, I'se here.

NORA (*in a conciliatory tone*). Well, I've been lookin' for ye.

TOP. Look fer me?

NORA. The same. Say, do yez know how ter write?

TOP. Know how ter write—cose I knows how ter write—yaas—write—cose.

NORA. Well I want ter sind a letther to a gintleman frind av mine an' me hands is that stiff afther washin' that I can' hold a pen—not but what I can write, mind ye.

TOP. Oh, yes, cose—sure.

NORA. Well, if ye'll be after writing the letther for me ye can have thim cookies what's left over from lasht week.

TOP. Golly, you jes' bet I'll write it. Lemme get de paper and de ink. (*Rushes to desk.*) Now what'll I say?

NORA. It's to Barney I'm writin'. Tell him I'd like to know what's kapin' him from writin' ter me. Belike he's gallyvantin' wid other girls, thinkin' I'll not be knowin' it. Tell him I'll give him a piece av me mind whin I see him, the scamp. I'll not be as azy wid him this time as lasht. That's all I'll say. Oh, yes, sind him me love and sign it "Your own Nora."

TOP. (*anxiously*). Say, is dere any pertickler way ter spell "Barney"?

NORA. I thought ye said ye could write.

TOP. Well, I ain't never writ no sich name as dat.

NORA. Thin ye may as well begin now as niver. Whilst ye're writin' I'll be takin' me bread out av the oven.

[*Exit, R.*

TOP. Say, I don't believe she kin write herself. I didn't tell her I couldn't write mo'n ten or fifteen words, but I wasn't goin' ter lose them cookies. Golly, I know what I'll do. I'll write all de words I knows and when she asks me ter read it, I'll say what she tol'd me ter write. (*Sits down and writes for a few minutes, digging pencil into mouth and spelling words out loud.*) "T—cross it—h—e—c—a—t—cross it—s—e—e—s—t—cross it—h—e—r—a—t—cross it. O—h—o—w—t—cross it—h—e—r—a—t—cross it—r—u—n—s. W—i—dot it—l—l—d—e—c—a—t—cross it—c—o—t—cross it—c—h—d—e—r—a—t—cross it—?—question mark—r—u—n—r—a—t—cross it—r—u—n—c—a—t—cross it—r—a—t—cross it—c—a—t—cross it—r—a—t—cross it—c—a—t—cross it." Dere, I guess dat page is filled up.

(*Top. stands up and reads to audience.*)

Enter NORA, C.

NORA. Are ye done?

TOP. Yaas, all done. I'll read it to her, 'cos it's pretty hard ter read my writin'. (*Reads.*) "Dear Barney: What does yer mean, sir, dat I don't hear from yer? Is yer jolli-vatin' wid de ladies? Will de cat cotch de rat? —"

NORA. Phwat in the name av goodness are ye talkin' about?

TOP. Golly, I done got off de track ob de letter. (*Reads.*) "When I see yer I will give yer a piece out of my mind. I send yer my love. Your own Nora."

NORA. That'll do, I guess. I'll put it in the invilope and sind it to him the first chanst I git.

[*Exit, R.*

TOP. Golly, I came powerful near givin' it away. I jes' caught myself in time. Whee! didn't she almos' kotch me though. Say, I'm powerful glad I learned ter write all dem words. It's mighty handy ter know how ter write—mighty handy. Golly, de cookies! I mos' forgot dem.

(*Rushes out, R.*)

Enter AUNT M. and VIRG., C.

AUNT M. Now I am ready to sit down and have a chat.

VIRG. Well, I am glad to have you for a few moments to

myself. You have been so busy—so dreadfully busy of late that we haven't had time for any of our old chats.

AUNT M. I know it. I've been coaching Nora, you know. Of course she doesn't suspect it. She thinks she is letting me help her. But really, she is getting to be quite a creditable cook now.

VIRG. Don't train her too well. After you've taken infinite pains to teach her everything, she'll probably ask for a raise.

AUNT M. We'll have to run the risk. I'm afraid we can't raise her for some time. The extra expense of having to pay her is quite a drain on us in these hard times.

VIRG. There it is again—hard times. I hate the word. This wretched war will make us all beggars before long. I wonder how much longer it will last, Aunt Margaret.

AUNT M. Everything must come to an end some time.

VIRG. I suppose so—but do you think that North and South will ever be friends again?

AUNT M. That depends. We'll love the North if we defeat it—and you know "love begets love"—so after a while I suppose the North will love us. We won't consider the possibility of the North defeating us.

VIRG. But, seriously, auntie, I hope this enmity will not last always.

AUNT M. Why are you troubling so about the future?

VIRG. Oh, because —

AUNT M. Because what?

VIRG. Well, because it means a great deal to me. I've been wanting to tell you about it for a long time because I have always told you everything—and so I couldn't keep it any longer.

AUNT M. Keep what, dear? You haven't told me anything yet.

VIRG. Oh, that Philip Lee wants me and I want Philip and Aunt Alice doesn't want either of us to want the other.

AUNT M. Now I suppose you think I am surprised, but I'm not. For some time I have heard hints and seen signs that showed from which quarter the wind blew. Does Aunt Alice know of it?

VIRG. Good gracious, I hope not. Of course you won't tell her, will you, Aunt Margaret?

AUNT M. Certainly not, child. That is for Philip to do.

VIRG. But, Aunt Margaret, you haven't told me what you think about it. Of course you disapprove.

AUNT M. Putting aside the question of North and South, I must say I know of no one who is worthier of you, little girl—and then this is a question of love and not of war—so I approve, Virginia.

VIRG. (*hugging her*). Oh, you darling old tease! I might have known you'd stand by me.

AUNT M. Well, it's a comfort anyway not to have to carry your secret all alone, isn't it?

VIRG. Yes, indeed. I feel a good deal lighter now that I have told you. If only Aunt Alice would look at it as you do.

AUNT M. Don't worry about that now, Virginia. We can talk of that later. At any rate we will have to wait until the war is over.

VIRG. I know it. Of course I must wait.

AUNT M. And while we wait, let us work. Suppose you help me shell some peas for dinner.

VIRG. You practical old dear! Lead on and I'll follow.

[*Exeunt, R.*]

Enter TOP., followed by MAR., L.

TOP. No, dey ain't anybody in.

(*Stands giggling at MAR.*)

MAR. Well, I'll sit down here until Mrs. Dare comes in.

TOP. Yes, sit down, yes.

MAR. You might tell Mrs. Dare that I'm waiting here.

TOP. (*still standing giggling*). Yes, I'll tell her, yes.

MAR. Don't you think you'd better go now?

TOP. Yes, p'raps I better, yes. [*Exit, still giggling.*]

MAR. Dear me, I'm feelin' dretful 'lonesome to-day. I suppose it's because the soldiers have gone. Well, war makes some sad partings, terribly sad. I hope I shan't see many more wars. (*Sighs.*) Dear me, I had really grown fond of that soldier. I guess he felt pretty bad leavin'. He spoke real beautiful and touchin' about the joys he must leave behind him. Mother declares he was thinkin' of the waffles and johnny-cake, but then mother has no sentiment about her.

Enter NORA, with cake and lemonade, C.

NORA. Mis' Dare says as how ye're to ate this and ter wait till she comes down.

MAR. Oh, thank you!

NORA. I'll wait fer the dishes.

MAR. My, that tastes good. Did you make this cake?

NORA. I did that, ma'am.

MAR. Well, it's excellent—excellent. I suppose you'll be cooking for yourself some day.

NORA. Well, I don't see any promise of anybody else cooking fer me.

MAR. O you misunderstand me. I mean that you will be gettin' married. I suppose you have a beau.

NORA. Oi have whin he's around. Sorra a sight have Oi had av him fer quite a while, but I mane ter kape me eye on him. I'm afther writin' a letther ter him tellin' him what Oi thinks av him. Oi have it here. There! read that. If that don't bring him to his senses thin me name's not Nora Flanagan.

MAR. (*reading slowly*). "The cat sees the rat. O how the rat runs. Will the cat ——"

NORA. In the name av goodness, phwat are ye radin'?

MAR. It appears to be a primary lesson.

NORA. It phwat, did ye say?

MAR. Why, it looks like a child's writin' lesson.

NORA. That rascally naygur—that is, I mane I musht have twishted the papers. Afther I wrote it I laid it careless-like on the table, an' I suppose I musht have picked this up, not noticin'. It's careless I'm gettin'. (*Glancing at tray.*) If it's through atin' ye are, I'll be afther takin' thim things away.

MAR. I really couldn't eat another bit. (*Exit NORA, with tray, R.*) Dear me! I have no appetite at all since the soldiers have gone.

Enter MRS D., C.

MRS. D. Good-morning, Martha.

MAR. Good-mornin', Mrs. Dare. Pretty busy now, ain't you?

MRS. D. Yes, I generally find something to do.

MAR. Well, it leaves no time for idle talk, and that's a blessing. I think a gossip is the most useless sort of a person on earth.

MRS. D. I agree with you.

MAR. Yes, it's a fact. There's the Widow Stokes. She comes over to our house early in the morning and before I know it, it's noon. And she doesn't get things right, either, for all she pretends she knows people's affairs pretty well. She

said that the Lawtons owed Dr. Dill twenty dollars since last May. Well, I happen to know that it's fifty dollars they owe him, 'cause I saw the bill lyin' on their sittin'-room table. And I told Widow Stokes so,

MRS. D. Certainly some people do gossip.

MAR. Yes, they do.

Enter AUNT M., c.

AUNT M. How do you do, Martha? So your soldier guests do not take all of your time.

MAR. (*sighing*). No, and they won't take any more of it. There's some plan afoot, for word came to the house early this morning and the soldiers left before breakfast. They wouldn't even wait till mother made some buckwheat cakes.

MRS. D. Is that really true? Then the armies must be going to meet. We shall have more bloodshed and Robert will be in the thick of it. Oh, I feel so brave and so scornful toward these Northern soldiers when there is a lull in the fighting, and now that they are beginning again I could go down on my knees to them if it would only bring Robert safely home to me. (*Goes hurriedly from room, R.*)

MAR. Sakes alive! didn't she get worked up about it. Now, I felt rather bad myself this morning when the boys left, but, land! I was calmer than that.

AUNT M. Remember, Martha, that an only boy is to his mother as the sun is to the flower.

MAR. My, that sounds like poetry. Well, I suppose she is considerable worried, but we've all had some sad partings in this war.

AUNT M. Yes, we all have. It was sad for us to part with Dinah and Liza and Sam, although they very considerably stole away in the night and so made it easier for all.

MAR. Well, I should think they'd hate to leave such a good home. Land sakes! I clean forgot to ask Mrs. Dare for her new crochet pattern. She went so sudden I forgot all about it. Well, I shan't wait now, for I've got several calls to make before dinner.

AUNT M. It is too bad for you to have to hurry away, but come again soon.

MAR. I certainly shall, for I want that crochet pattern real bad.

[*Exeunt together, L.*]

TOP. *dashes in R., looks wildly for place to hide, runs out L. A moment later NORA rushes in L., looks under table, etc., then runs out L. Presently enter NORA, leading TOP. by ear.*

NORA. Come right along, ye little imp. I want ter have a little conversation wid ye. (TOP. *tries to pull away.*) O ye don't want ter, don't ye?

TOP. I ain't got de time. I has ter sweep out de shed an' feed de hens an'—an' lots of tings. What do yer want ter conversation me about, anyway?

NORA. I'll tell ye in just a minute. Stay where ye are and don't worry about the hens. This mornin' jusht before I was goin' ter send the letther ter me frind Barney, thinks I, "I'll rade it again an' see if I wants ter say anything more." I opens it an' I looks at it an' what does I see but a lot av talk about a rat an' a cat an' some kind av a race. What have ye ter say ter that? (*Walks around table. TOP. twists her fingers and says nothing.*) I don't hear ye sayin' anything.

TOP. No, I ain't sayin' nothin'—nothin' at all.

NORA. Well, ye'd better begin. I want ter know what ye meant by writin' that trash. Belikes ye thought I couldn't read nor write.

TOP. Golly, I thought ye couldn't. Neither kin I.

NORA. Well, it's many an impidint mortal have I seen in my day, but sorra a one have I seen ter equal ye.

Enter VIRG., C.

VIRG. What are you looking so disturbed about, Nora?

TOP. Oh, Miss Virginia, she done been tellin' me she don't know how ter —

NORA. The child has been pesterin' me to let her dusht the room fer me, but I'm tellin' her she's more in me way than anything. Topsy (*with a threatening look*), hadn't ye better feed the hens?

TOP. It's about a letter she done make me write —

NORA. Thim hens will be very hungry, and whin you've finished you may eat thim doughnuts that I —

[*Exit TOP., hastily, R.*

VIRG. You and Topsy seem to differ as to what you've just been talking about. However, will you come with me? I want to show you about cleaning the attic.

[*Exit VIRG., R., followed by NORA, jubilant.*

Enter AUNT M. and MRS. D., c.

MRS. D. I know it, Margaret, I must learn to control myself. 'Tis useless giving away like this to my feelings. I find myself developing into a creature of moods and tempers. Only the other day I turned upon Ruth Lee and I have really been sorry since. Did Virginia tell you about it?

AUNT M. No, she didn't. Virginia seldom repeats a story.

MRS. D. Well, Ruth was here one day last week with Virginia and I came into the room. I cannot forgive the girl for adopting the Northern cause, and yet I think I should have concealed my bitterness in my own house. I showed very plainly how I felt toward her, and when Virginia asked her to have dinner with us, I didn't second the invitation—so Ruth went home. I have since been sorry for my hastiness, and Virginia avoids me as much as possible, and that adds another hurt.

AUNT M. I do not wish to criticise you, Alice, but really I think you should not be so quick to blame. If Ruth and Philip Lee believe that the Northern cause is the right one, they would be acting against their principles if they did not uphold it. Let us pity rather than blame them.

MRS. D. Ah, Margaret, you were ever gentle of heart. I cannot look at it as you do. And that reminds me, when Bessie Allen and Nell Cary were here the other day they dropped some remarks that lead me to believe that Virginia is interested in Philip Lee, and I have noticed that she has been rather distraught for some time. I have passed over the gossip about Robert and Ruth Lee as idle talk—absolutely unfounded—but I am somewhat worried about this. Of course, Virginia knows, without being told, that such a friendship would not be countenanced.

AUNT M. How will she know if no one tells her?

MRS. D. Don't quibble, Margaret. Of course she knows that I would never allow such a thing for a moment.

AUNT M. Why?

MRS. D. (*rising*). Margaret Leighton, what are you thinking of? You don't mean to tell me that you would encourage her?

AUNT M. (*slowly*). I remember when I was a girl that I had a sister—stubborn, proud and very much in love with a certain John Dare. My father had absolutely forbidden her lover to come to the house, or her to communicate with him in

any way. And I remember a certain moonlight evening I was sitting in my room, looking out at the sky and listening to the nightingale, when my sister came in from a stolen walk with her lover and stood before me, with shining eyes, and said: "When the moon shall have lost its radiance and the nightingale's song its music, then shall I cease to love John Dare." (MRS. D. *sits by table and buries face in hands*. AUNT M. *goes toward door*.) And I remember how in spite of all opposition she clung to him until my father relented. [*Exit, R.*

MRS. D. (*lifting her head*). How it all comes back! And dear old Margaret, how she stood by us, even as she is standing by Virginia now. Ah, well, I will oppose her no more. The only essential thing is to be happy, and if she loves him she will never be happy without him. Perhaps I am weak to yield thus, but then—I remember John.

Enter BESS and NELL, L.

GIRLS. Good-afternoon, Mrs. Dare.

MRS. D. Good-afternoon, girls. Sit down. I am glad to see you.

NELL. I hope we're not delaying you. I suppose you don't have quite as much leisure time as you used to.

MRS. D. No, I don't, but in one way I am glad of it. When one is busy one doesn't have time to think and worry so much.

BESS. I suppose that's true.

MRS. D. I think Virginia is around somewhere. I'll call Topsy and tell her to find her.

BESS. Oh, no, don't trouble, er—er—we'll wait until she comes. Don't send for her.

Enter TOP., C.

TOP. Here I is. I done heard yer said my name.

MRS. D. Topsy, go and find Virginia, and tell her these young ladies are here.

BESS. Oh, don't send for her, Mrs. Dare. Never mind, Topsy.

TOP. (*eagerly*). I know where she is. I seen her go up ter de attic wid that Irish—wid Nora. I kin git her.

BESS. Don't trouble, Topsy. Never mind.

TOP. 'Tain't any trouble. I'll git her.

BESS. I say, Topsy, don't go for her. (*Exit TOP., C.*) The fact is, Mrs. Dare, we would rather like, that is, Nell and

I thought we'd better tell you, and it is best not to bother Virginia just now.

MRS. D. My dear girls, what is it you want to tell me?

BESS. Can't you start it, Nell?

NELL. Well, the night before last, Bess and I ——

BESS. Oh, Nell, it was in the afternoon first.

NELL. O that's right. Well, in the afternoon of the night before last—I mean the day before last, Bess and I happened to be in Granny Royal's garden when Virginia and Ruth Lee came in. They were talking about ——

BESS. Oh, Nell, we won't tell Virginia's part of it.

NELL. Oh, no. Well, suppose you tell it yourself. You have to correct me so much.

BESS. Well, to make it short, as Nell said, we happened to be in the garden and heard Granny Royal tell Ruth how your Robert had been carrying messages to General Lee, and his horse stumbled in the woods at night and threw ——

MRS. D. Was he hurt badly? Tell me quickly—and where is he?

BESS. He wasn't hurt very seriously, but he was unable to go on, and he came to Granny Royal's at night, and she is now keeping him in hiding until he recovers.

MRS. D. Oh, how glad I am of that!

BESS. Oh, that isn't the grandest part of it. Granny was telling Ruth how worried Robert was about the messages being delayed, and said she didn't know what they were going to do about it. And what do you think—Ruth Lee offered to take them herself—think of it—take them herself. Then they planned how to do it. Granny proposed to dress Ruth up in her clothes and put the messages in a basket of herbs and have Ruth take them in that way. They planned that she would start after dark, spend the night with a friend of Granny Royal's, and then go on to General Lee next day, for the messages had to reach him that day.

MRS. D. And did she really do it?

BESS. Yes, she did. (*In an embarrassed manner.*) We happened to be there in the evening, too, and we saw Ruth come, and then Granny dressed her up and she started off.

NELL. And so Bess and I thought that as long as we happened to hear and see it, we ought to tell you of it.

MRS. D. (*slowly*). I think it was the bravest thing I ever knew any girl to do. I think I could love Ruth Lee for that.

BESS. Yes, and I blush to think of the way we have treated

her. I shall feel positively grateful if she ever notices us again.

MRS. D. I am glad that you have told me this, girls. And you say my son is in Granny Royal's house? Oh, I must go to him at once.

BESS. Oh, I wouldn't go now. It would never do, for the soldiers might discover Robert's whereabouts if you went in the daytime. It would be safer to wait until night, and if you can help it, we'd rather you wouldn't tell Granny Royal how you found it out. Of course I am glad we told you, but she might wonder how—how—er——

MRS. D. (*smiling*). How you happened to be there. All right, I shall wait until it is dark and I shall not say who told me,—still I am glad you did happen to be there.

NELL. Well, Bess, I think we had better go now, don't you?

BESS. Yes, I think we had. Tell Virginia we'll be in again soon. Say we couldn't stop now. Good-bye. [*Exeunt.*]

MRS. D. (*soliloquizing*). I feel as if something within me had melted to-day, first with Margaret's plea for Virginia and Philip Lee, and now with this account of Ruth's bravery and loyalty to Robert. It must be true after all that they love each other, else she would never have taken such a risk for him, and he would never have accepted such a favor from her. I suppose I may as well admit that Cupid has defeated me. It is folly for me to try to point out the way to him. (*VIRG. enters room from R., then sees MRS. D., and turns to go. MRS. D. looks up.*) Virginia, come here, child.

VIRG. (*quietly*). Do you want me, Aunt Alice?

MRS. D. Yes, dear. I want to say several things to you. Sit here, child. (*Points to hassock and VIRG. sits down.*) First of all I want to tell you that I am sorry I hurt Ruth Lee so, the other day, and that in doing so I hurt you. Am I forgiven?

VIRG. (*taking MRS. D.'s hand*). Yes, we will put it away in the past.

MRS. D. And now is there anything you would like to tell me?

VIRG. I can't think of anything, Aunt Alice.

MRS. D. Nothing at all?

VIRG. No, nothing at all.

MRS. D. Nothing about Philip Lee?

VIRG. Why, Aunt Alice, who told you?

MRS. D. (*smiling*). Then you have something to tell, after all?

VIRG. (*confusedly*). Oh, I didn't think you meant anything like that? (*Wonderingly*.) And you're not going to be angry about it?

MRS. D. No, I am not going to be angry about it,—and to Aunt Margaret is due your gratitude. She preached one of her direct little sermons to me this afternoon, and showed me the error of my way.

VIRG. She is a dear if there ever was one, and so are you. (*Laying her cheek on MRS. D.'s hand.*) And you've made me, O so happy!

MRS. D. There is something else, child. Bess and Nell were here a little while ago, and told me that Robert was thrown from his horse while carrying some messages to General Lee, and just managed to get to Granny Royal's. (*VIRG. arises excitedly.*) The messages had to be delivered the next day and that brave girl, Ruth Lee, volunteered to carry them, disguised as Granny. I want you, if you will, Virginia, to bring Ruth Lee to me so that I may thank her. Will you?

VIRG. (*throwing her arms around her neck*). Will I? Just won't I. I'll go now and get her if she is at home. Oh, I wouldn't have believed ten minutes ago that I could be so happy now. I'll bring Ruth back with me. [*Exit, L.*]

MRS. D. Strange to say, I feel almost as happy as Virginia. I think I'll go and make myself presentable before Ruth comes. (*Calling NORA.*) Nora, please dust this room. I am expecting a visitor this afternoon. [*Exit, C.*]

NORA (*aloud*). Faith an' the mistress looks that plazed ye'd think she had a fortin' left her. Is it dushtin', she says? Then sorra a bit of dusht is there here. Faith, then, if the mistress is happy, meself is jusht as happy as her. Shure didn't Barney come ter the door this mornin'. 'Tis throe he's lost his job and has takin' ter thrampin'; but it cheered me heart to get a sight av his ould red head. (*Begins to hum.*)

Enter TOP., keeping hands behind back, C.

TOP. Has yer got dem, too?

NORA. Got phwat, do ye mane?

TOP. I dunno—de same as missis. I seed her a minit ago, and she was singin', an' I ain't heard her sing fer a long time.

NORA. Well, Oi loikes a little music meself once in a while.

TOP. (*aside*). Golly, she's powerful good-natured dis afternoon. (*To NORA.*) Golly, you is mighty smart.

NORA (*beaming*). Ye think so, do ye?

TOP. Yaas. Yer can sing—yer can make cookies what'll eat a hole in deyselves dey's so good.

NORA (*gratified*). There ain't any av thim cookies, but ye can have some av the gingerbread that was left.

TOP. Thank yer. (*Turning her back and rushing to R.*) Golly, dere's a man ridin' lickety cut down the road on horse-back.

NORA. Ye thievin' imp ye. Ye didn't wait ter be tould ter take the gingerbread. (*Exit TOP., hastily, R.*) 'Tis small thanks ye get fer being civil ter these naygurs. I'd better foller her an' see does she leave anything at all fer tay. [*Exit, R.*]

Enter RUTH and VIRG., L.

VIRG. Sit down, dear. So it has all come out straight at last. I knew it would, but I didn't know the time was so near. How did you ever do it? Weren't you afraid?

RUTH. Well, to tell the honest truth, Virginia, I was afraid. I couldn't help wondering what would happen to me and to Robert, too, if any of the soldiers met me and saw through the disguise.

VIRG. I shudder to think of it. And how did you get to General Lee?

RUTH. I think that was the hardest part of all. It was a long walk from Intervale to the Southern camp, and when I got there the soldiers crowded round me and wanted to know if I had anything for sale, and some of them laughed and I couldn't stand that. So I snatched off my hood and cape and glasses, and told them that I wanted to see the general on important business. When they saw that I had been disguised they were somewhat startled and decidedly impressed, and they ushered me right in to the general. After that the way was clear.

VIRG. You brave old dear. I should have liked to witness the discomfiture of those soldiers when you took off your disguise; but we won't talk another thing about it until we've seen Aunt Alice. I'll go and get right off. [*Exit.*]

RUTH. I wonder if I have shown poor spirit in coming here again, but Virginia said her aunt was so earnest about wanting me to come, I couldn't refuse.

Enter MRS. D., c.

MRS. D. No, you couldn't refuse. (*RUTH rises ; MRS. D. holds out hands.*) Ruth Lee, I want to ask your forgiveness.

RUTH. I gave it long ago, Mrs. Dare.

MRS. D. You are the bravest girl I have ever known, and I have a debt of thanks to you that I shall never be able to pay. I think my son will have to assume the debt.

RUTH. And he has already promised to pay it. I may tell you that, may I not?

MRS. D. It is, indeed, welcome news to me.

Enter BESS, NELL and MAR., l.

MAR. (*excitedly*). There's some news or other. A man rode by like wildfire a few minutes ago, calling out something I couldn't catch, and I ran right over here.

BESS. Yes, he passed us and we turned back hoping to hear about it.

MRS. D. I wonder what it can be.

Enter TOP., excitedly, c.

TOP. Golly, missis, dere's a man jes' went by de lane an' he 'done tol' us dat General Lee surren—surren—surrendid ter General Grant at Apple—Apple—matrix.

NORA sticks head in door, c.

NORA. 'Tis thrue, ma'am.

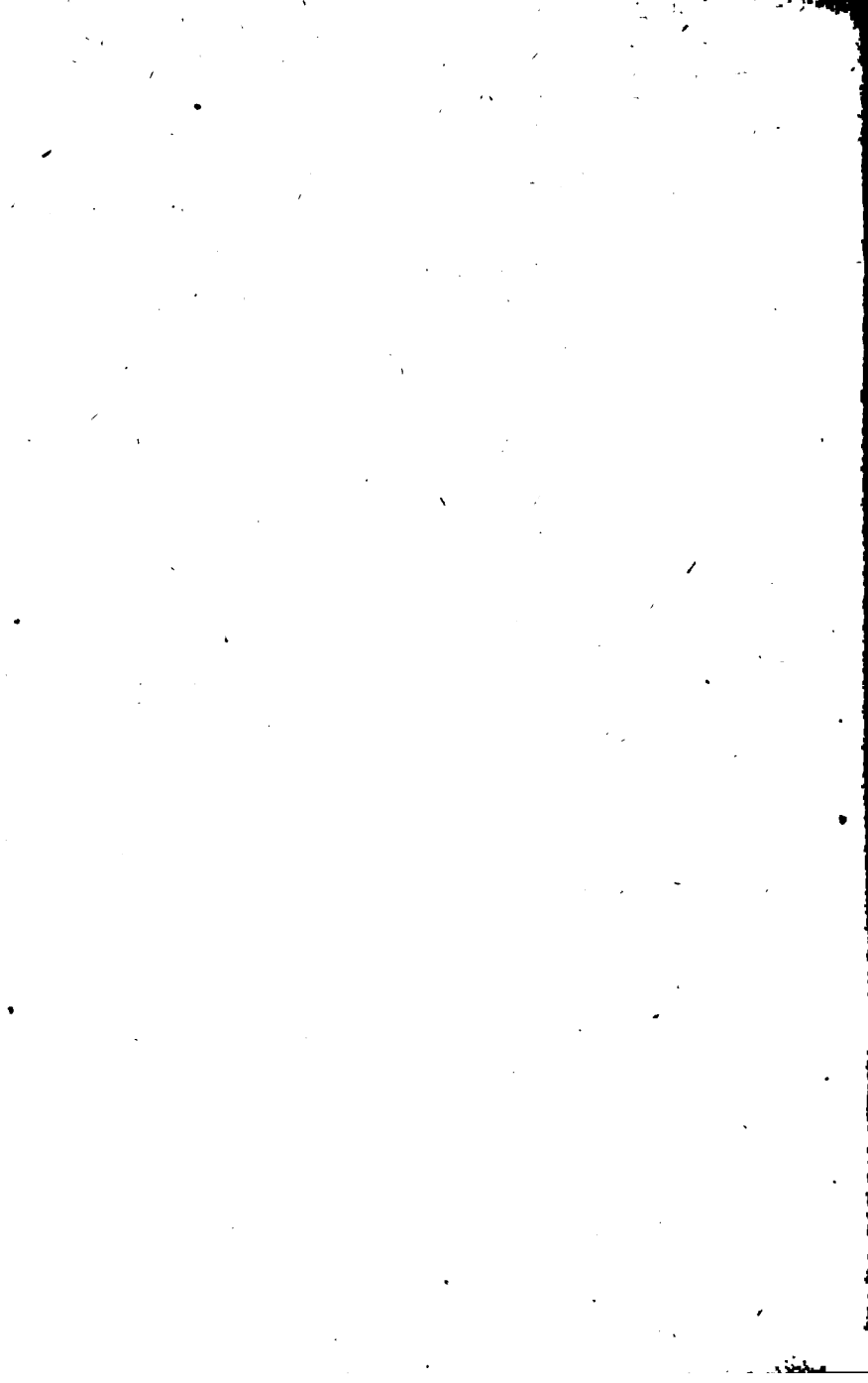
Enter VIRG. and AUNT M., c.

VIRG. Has Topsy told you? A messenger has come to the village with the news that General Lee gave up his sword to General Grant at the Appomattox Court House this morning. The North has won!

(All stand silent looking at MRS. D.)

MRS. D. (*walks over to RUTH with hands extended ; slowly*). As Lee gives his sword in surrender to Grant, I give my hand in friendship to you, Ruth Lee.

CURTAIN



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A Farce in One Act

By H. Manley Dana

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TEDDY, OR, THE RUNAWAYS

A Comedy in Three Acts

By Walter Ben Hare

(Originally produced at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York City,
February 16, 1912.)

Four males, four females. Scenery, a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays two and a quarter hours. An eloping couple take refuge with the Junipers when their auto breaks down. The lady explains that they are being pursued by her brothers, so when a sheriff and posse arrive in pursuit of two thieves, Mrs. Juniper locks them down cellar to let the lovers escape. The sheriff gets out and arrests the Junipers whom he accuses of being the thieves. It finally appears that the lady is an authoress and that she and her husband are posing as thieves in order to get material for a novel. Full of action; characters all good; lots of comedy; strongly recommended.

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MRS. JUNIPER, *a Young Wife.*

VICTORIA, *the Girl in the Taxi.*

TEXANA, *the Girl of the Golden West.*

MAX JUNIPER, *the Perplexed Husband.*

ALONZO WILLING, *the Fortune Hunter.*

TED KEEGAN, *the Man on the Box.*

SHERIFF JIM LARRABEE, *Officer 666.*

Two Deputy Sheriffs

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Living room at Max Juniper's house on a Texas ranch. Spring time.

ACT II.—Same as Act I. The great diamond robbery.

ACT III.—Same as Acts I and II. The thunderbolt.

WANTED—A PITCHER

A Farce in One Act

By M. N. Beebe

Eleven males. Scenery not important; costumes, modern. Plays half an hour. Hank Dewberry, the crack pitcher of the home nine, is kept from the championship game by his skinflint father who wants him to do the haying. Hank's friends try to find a substitute pitcher, with humorous but unsatisfactory results. The elder Dewberry finally releases Hank when one of the players shows him how to win the county championship at checkers, on which he sets his heart. Hebrew, Irish, Italian and "hayseed" comedy character parts. Recommended.

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